



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 24, 2008

The Honorable Naida Kaen, Chairman
N.H. House of Representatives
Science, Technology, and Energy Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 304
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: House Bill 1632, continuing the biodiesel study commission

Dear Chairman Kaen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) regarding House Bill 1632, which seeks to extend the work of the 2006 House Bill 689 Biodiesel Study Commission for an additional year. DES was a member of the Commission and supports this bill.

Between July and November 2007, the Biodiesel Study Commission met seven times, producing a final report in November 2007. The Commission looked at a broad array of issues that impact the ability to produce and/or distribute biodiesel in New Hampshire and gathered input from several outside sources including agricultural, fuel supply and distribution, and biodiesel production experts. The report documents current transportation fuel use in New Hampshire, the potential for producing biodiesel from New Hampshire grown crops, and information on the health impacts of biodiesel emissions as compared to diesel emissions. It makes a case for increased use of biodiesel for public health, environmental, and energy security reasons. It then outlines a roadmap for increasing use of biodiesel in both transportation and heating fuels.

The final report included 16 recommendations, some of which constitute the "low hanging fruit" such as the recommendation that state government lead by example by increasing use of biodiesel in government fleet vehicles and buildings (proposed by House Bill 1631 in this session). Other recommendations are more complex, such as the recommendation to seek funding for support of an agronomist for the Cooperative Extension Service to assist New Hampshire farmers with selection and cultivation of oil seed crops for biodiesel production, or the recommendation that the state seek ways to divert yellow and brown grease waste from disposal facilities to fuel production facilities. These more complex recommendations would benefit from further discussion and evaluation by the Commission members. It was clear to Commission members very early in our deliberations that the scope of work was far more than could be fully addressed in a single summer. Prior to adjourning the last meeting the Commission members present voted unanimously to seek to continue the work of the Commission as proposed by this bill.

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Renewable fuels can assist New Hampshire's efforts to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. It is important for the state to pursue increased use of renewable fuels, but to do so in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and that supports the state's economy. Continuation of the Commission will help to ensure New Hampshire develops appropriate strategies to incorporate biodiesel into our renewable fuel portfolio.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 1632. Please call me at 271-3503 or Rebecca E. Ohler, Supervisor of the Mobile Source Section, at 271-6749 if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,



Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Rep. David Borden, Chair HB 689 Biodiesel Study Commission